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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN
FOREST AND RANGE EXPERIMENT STATION

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# SPECIFICATIONS FOR WESTERN LARCH PEELER LOGS 1/

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Interest runs high in the development of a plywood industry in the West using species other than the old standard Douglas-fir peeler log. This station over a period of several years has made numerous tests of western larch (Larix occidentalis) to determine its suitability for plywood. Concurrently tests have also been made in commercial plants on a pilot-plant scale. All of these have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that larch is an excellent plywood species. Lack of development can be attributed to peeler-log-supply problems and the economic uncertainties involved in a going lumber concern's diverting a substantial portion of its select-producing lumber logs to plywood.

As a result of experience to date, the following tentative specifications for western larch peeler logs have been developed:

Logs shall be from sound, live, old-growth western larch of reasonably uniform growth.

Grain: Twist or spiral of 1 inch in 5 inches of lineal length of log shall be permitted in logs 24 inches d.i.b. and larger, but shall not exceed 1 inch in 10 inches for smaller logs. Log center or pith must be less than 2 inches off center for logs under 20 inches d.i.b., but may be 2 to 4 inches off center for logs 20 to 24 inches d.i.b., 4 inches off center for logs 25 to 34 inches, and 5 inches off center for larger logs.

Knots: All logs below 20 inches d.i.b. shall be surface clear, and 50 percent of all logs by volume shall be surface clear. Visible knots if confined to one quadrant of the log may be included in the remaining 50 percent. No distinction is made between live and dead knots.

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1/ Used in production of veneer on a lathe and usually cut into 1/8- and 1/10-inch thicknesses.

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Heart check: Shall be confined to 6-inch section in center of logs below 20 inches d.i.b., but may extend to within 4 inches of edge of all sized logs provided grain twist does not exceed 1 inch in 10 inches.

Rot: Center rot not to exceed a 4-inch hole in logs under 20 inches d.i.b. and not to exceed a 6-inch hole in logs 20 inches and larger shall be permitted. Firm rot shall be permitted provided log will peel 50 percent of its contents in sound, uniformly colored veneer.

Pitch pockets and shake: Shall be permissible in logs 24 inches d.i.b. and larger provided defect does not prevent recovery of 50 percent or more of log contents in sound, acceptable veneer. This will admit butts in which shake does not extend into outer one third of radius.

Size: Minimum d.i.b. shall ordinarily be 20 inches. Smooth, sound, straight-grained logs obviously having deep clear down to 16 inches d.i.b. are acceptable. Practically all logs will come from trees 25 inches d.b.h. and larger. Lengths shall be 4, 8, 12, etc., in multiples of 4 feet up to and including 32 feet. Special cases will be made of logs longer than 32 feet. A trimming allowance of 2 inches shall be included for each 4 feet of length.

Scaling: In making deductions for defects, scaling of peeler logs shall conform to customary sawlog scaling practices.